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ABSTRACT

This document was prepared to facilitate and guide the discussions of a conference on economic planning in Asia and the Pacific in its deliberations and in the formulation of its recommendations. Organized in such a way as to correspond closely with the organization of the agenda for the Conference, chapter 1 draws attention to the changing context for education across what is undoubtedly a vast and diverse region. It points to new societal pressures and directions that affect how education's mission is defined and its work planned and implemented, and it reports on recent important educational developments and achievements. Chapter 2 overviews progress with regard to achievement of the Jomtien goals regarding Education for All. It identifies persisting problems and dilemmas as well as fundamental policy issues requiring discussion and action. Chapter 3 draws attention to a number of major concerns facing countries of the region and indicates how education systems and sub-systems are responding to various new pressures and demands. Attention is given to particular sector responses with respect to organizational structure, curriculum content, and delivery systems as well as to system level initiatives in policy, planning and resource mobilization, education facilities, and quality assurance. The final chapter, chapter 4, draws attention to the substantial progress made in international and regional cooperation, reporting on particular projects and activities, and suggesting how regional, sub-regional, and bilateral cooperation could be further developed. (DK)

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ED 381 416

Sixth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and those Responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and the Pacific

Organized by UNESCO with the co-operation of ESCAP

Kuala Lumpur, 21-24 June 1993

Education for Development: Responding to New Challenges

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SIXTH REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF EDUCATION
AND THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING
IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Kuala Lumpur, 21-24 June 1993

EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT: RESPONDING TO NEW CHALLENGES

(ED-93/CONF.202/LD.12)

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INTRODUCTION

1. This document has been prepared by the UNESCO Secretariat to provide information and comments in order to assist the Sixth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and the Pacific in its deliberations and in the formulation of its recommendations.

2. The document draws on the report of the Fifth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and the Pacific (MINEDAP V), and on the reports and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Regional Co-operation in Education in Asia and the Pacific, the Consultation Meetings of the Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL), and the Coordination Committee of the Asia and the Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID). It takes account of recommendations and resolutions of the World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs (Jomtien, March 1990), recent sessions of the International Conference on Education (ICE, 1990 and 1992, Geneva), the World Summit for Children (September 1990, New York), and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) (June 1992, Rio de Janeiro). The document also has drawn on valuable reports prepared by international and regional organizations and individual countries of the region.

3. The document has been organized in such a way as to correspond closely with the organization of the Agenda for the Conference, particularly Agenda Items 8 and 9.

4. Chapter I draws attention to the changing context for education across what is undoubtedly a vast and diverse region. It points to new societal pressures and directions which affect how education's mission is defined and its work planned and implemented, and it reports on recent important educational developments and achievements.

5. Chapter II overviews progress with regard to achievement of the Jomtien goals regarding Education For All; it identifies persisting problems and dilemmas as well as fundamental policy issues requiring discussion and action.

6. Chapter III draws attention to a number of major concerns facing countries of the region and indicates how education systems and sub-systems are responding to various new pressures and demands. Attention is given to particular sector responses with respect to organizational structure, curriculum content and delivery systems as well as to system-level initiatives in policy, planning and resource mobilization, education facilities and quality assurance.

7. The final chapter draws attention to the substantial progress made in international and regional co-operation, reporting on particular projects and activities, and suggesting how regional, sub-regional and bilateral co-operation could be further developed.

8. In addition to this working document, Conference participants have at their disposition country reports presented by Member States in the region, as well as three reference documents:

(i) *Major Development Themes for Asia and the Pacific, prepared* by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) (ED-93/MINEDAP/REF.1);

(ii) *Development of Education in Asia and the Pacific: A Statistical Review* (ED-93/MINEDAP/REF.2);

(iii) *Report on UNESCO's Regional Programmes in Education in Asia and the Pacific since the Bangkok Conference (1985)* (ED-93/MINEDAP/REF.3).

9. This document does not claim to be comprehensive. Rather it aims, on the basis of available documentation and data, to draw attention to changing conditions, major developments and key issues which the Conference may wish to consider and to raise others which might supplement the topics set out in the Agenda. In the course of the document, a few of many possible examples of specific programmes and measures being undertaken in the region have been cited. It is the Secretariat's hope that during the course of discussion the participants will add to or amplify these examples.

10. The Secretariat would like to record its thanks to the members of the Advisory Committee on Regional Co-operation in Education in Asia and the Pacific for the valuable comments and suggestions it provided for preparing the documentation of the Conference.

Chapter 1

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN A CHANGING CONTEXT: A REGIONAL OVERVIEW

DIVERSITY AND VARIETY

11. Any discussion of educational development in the region of Asia and the Pacific needs to take account of the diversity and variety in the region, both with respect to economic and social development, cultural values and political arrangements on the one hand, and educational structures and policies on the other.

12. Three types of differences are of particular importance in the context of this document. First, there are huge differences in population and geographic size, which have major implications for the provision and delivery of services such as education. Second, there are major differences in terms of the stage of economic growth and level of development and the application of modern technology. Third, there are important differences in culture, tradition and values, drawing from different philosophical and religious perspectives and from different historical experience.

13. Education systems and institutions too differ to a marked degree across the region. There are obvious differences in terms of traditions in curricula and educational practices, and in how various education systems have developed to their present stage. There are also important differences with respect to the organization and structure of education systems (such as the degree of decentralization and devolution), in student enrolment patterns and participation rates, and in the role played by the private sector.

14. Despite these differences, there also are striking similarities across the region in terms of the kinds of educational problems being encountered today and in the responses being developed. Such similarities provide a powerful impetus for collaboration and regional co-operation.

THE CHANGING CONTEXT FOR EDUCATION

15. Education is inextricably linked to its societal context. Education is expected to respond to various important changes in the wider society of which it is part; it also plays an increasingly active role in shaping socio-economic and cultural life as well as basic values towards issues such as poverty, environmental degradation, and health and drug problems. Of particular concern are important current changes in the societal context which call for new responses by education systems and institutions.

Demographic trends

16. The population of the region has grown rapidly over the past three decades and by the year 2000 it will have reached almost 4,000 million people. This growth has placed major strains on the provision of services and infrastructure, and will continue to do so. The total number of children and youths aged 0-14 is expected to increase by 137 million over the period 1990 to 2000 to reach 1,2 million by the turn of the century. Primary school-age population generally of 6-11 years old will grow from 409 million to an estimated 481 million by the year 2000. Another important trend is population mobility within countries, with major movements of population from rural to urban areas.

Political climate

17. A number of countries of the region are enjoying increasing stability and steady economic growth in comparison with the political and economic turmoil in other parts of the world. Conflicts which have characterized some countries in the region over the past decades have come closer to peaceful solution. Countries which have followed a rigid policy of self-reliance are reconsidering this approach and are now more open to external trade and economic relations. A recent important development has been the transition of the new republics of Central Asia from isolation to inter-action with the countries of the region as their political and economic systems open up. The problem of national integration in pluralistic societies has come increasingly to the fore and many governments are engaged in curbing disruptive and disintegrative tendencies by fostering cultural identity and a sense of nationhood.

Economic development

18. Over the past decade, the economic performance of many developing countries in the region has been impressive. Average gross national product (GNP) per capita (calculated according to the *World Bank Atlas* method of converting data in national currency to US dollars) in current US dollars for countries in Eastern Asia and the Pacific increased from $390 in 1980 to $590 in 1990; in Southern Asia, it grew from $230 to $330 during the same period. Overall economic conditions in the region remained strong in 1990 to 1992, despite

deterioration in the world economy. Factors contributing to the region's sustained economic growth include continued demand for commodity and industrial goods from the world's major industrialized countries, structural adjustment within economies and the increasing flow of intra-regional trade and investment. A number of countries have been adversely affected by fluctuations in the prices of major export commodities. At the same time, due recognition should be given to the disparity between growth rates of the more dynamic economies of the region and those characterized by persistent stagnation and slow growth, particularly the least developed countries and small island states.

19. Restructuring of economies in the region is a matter of current interest. Recent years have witnessed an increase in emphasis on policy reforms as a function of changing world markets and international competitiveness, and a more significant role for market mechanisms. Restructuring entails new priorities regarding infrastructural development, industrialization and trade promotion, increases in agricultural productivity and expansion of service industries. This in turn influences occupational distribution patterns and associated requirements for skills and training.

20. Despite impressive economic growth, poverty remains a major problem in the region. In many cases, poverty combined with illiteracy, poor health and inadequate housing, and lack of appropriate opportunity to acquire relevant employment skills further accentuates the disparity between the countries with more dynamic economies and those characterized by persistent stagnation.

Technology and environment

21. The final quarter of the twentieth century marks the dawn of a new technological era characterized by the extension of the use of new forms of energy, electronics, telecommunications, computer technology, automation and cybernetics. Communication technologies continue to multiply and become more and more powerful. The region is a major producer of computer hardware and software and has, over recent years, also become a major user. Audio-visual equipment and facilities have become increasingly available, while satellite communication has opened up new possibilities for business, education and entertainment.

22. Increasing community awareness has developed about major environmental problems such as land degradation, deforestation, and water and air pollution which directly affect human health and the quality of life. The region has experienced an over-exploitation of natural resources which is posing a threat to sustainable development. In the global context, the region shares concern over the implications for climate change of the 'greenhouse effect' and the depletion of the ozone layer. The region is being repeatedly struck by natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods and landslides.

Cultural identity

23. Across the region there has been a renewed emphasis on the importance of humanistic and cultural values. Many developing countries strive to develop the industrial capacities and socio-economic system vital for sustainable development, and at the same time they wish to preserve the most valued elements of their indigenous cultures. Thus, they attach increasing attention to the preservation of their cultural identity in the face of modernization.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS IN EDUCATION

24. Over the past decade, impressive educational development has been achieved in the region, giving reason for satisfaction (See ED-93/MINEDAP/REF.2 for details). At the same time, important problems still need to be addressed if education is to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Increased educational opportunity

25. One of the most impressive recent educational achievements of the region has been quantitative expansion in student enrolments, in educational programmes and in the number of schools, colleges and universities. Overall enrolment at all levels of regular education in the region grew from 550 million in 1980 to 637 million in 1990. The growth was particularly rapid in pre-primary and higher education, at more than 4 per cent yearly for the region as a whole. Such expansion has been in response to social demand and to the needs of the labour market on the one hand, and to the needs of economic and social development on the other.

26. Many countries have seen impressive developments in pre-school education, although generally this sub-sector does not form part of the formal education system. Regional enrolment in pre-schools grew from 30.3 million in 1980 to 46.9 million in 1990. However, very few countries have been able to provide pre-school education to more than 40 per cent of the corresponding age-group population. In pre-school education, the private sector in many Member States is playing a key role.

27. A concerted effort has been made in the region

to achieve universal primary education and to combat illiteracy. Primary education has witnessed continuous rapid growth since the adoption of the Karachi Plan in 1960. Enrolment grew from 348 million in 1980 to 373 million in 1990. The decline of school-age population in Eastern Asia from 164 million in 1980 to 137 million in 1990 has neutralized the rapid growth of enrolment in other countries. Today, most countries in the region can be said to have established overall capacities to enrol all the primary-school-age population. In many of these countries such capacity in terms of school facilities is unevenly distributed in relation to the geographical location of the primary-school-age population across the national territory. Besides, such capacities are often occupied by a sizable proportion of over-aged children and youths who either enrolled late or repeated grades. In a number of countries growth rates in the primary school-age population continue to surpass those of student enrolments. These countries, mostly characterized by an enrolment ratio below 40 per cent, will have to increase enrolment capacities substantially if universal primary education is to become a reality by the year 2000 (see section 5.3 of ED-93/MINEDAP/REF.2).

28. Today the size of the unenrolled primary-school-age population stands at some 55 million for the region as a whole. The bulk of these are girls and children of disadvantaged groups. In a number of countries, considerable disparity exists between primary school enrolments of boys and of girls; the countries with the widest gap in gross enrolment ratios by sex are also those with lower overall total enrolments.

29. The eradication of adult illiteracy remains an international problem of massive importance. Asia alone accounts for more than 700 million adult illiterates, or three-quarters of the world total. The majority of these are women and people from disadvantaged groups. A recent UNESCO assessment shows that considerable progress in raising the adult literacy rate has been made in the region over the past three decades, and this trend is likely to continue in the future. The literacy rate for the region as a whole grew from 45.5 per cent in 1970 to 65.2 per cent in 1990; it is expected to reach 71.1 per cent by the end of the century. The number of adult illiterates, however, also continued to rise, from 638 million in 1970 to almost 700 million in 1990. Considerable additional efforts will be required both to stem this growth and to eradicate illiteracy.

30. While secondary education is not compulsory in many countries, there is an increasing trend for students to remain at school beyond the primary-school level, as can be seen from transition rates of 75 per cent or more in most countries today. More than 60 per cent of secondary school-age population are enrolled in Australia, Fiji, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka, while 30 to 60 per cent are enroled in China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nepal, Thailand, Turkey and Viet Nam. The coming years will witness a major expansion in secondary school facilities and the teaching force. In the more advanced Member States, there has been a dramatic increase in the proportion of students completing a full secondary education.

31. The relative share of the technical/vocational stream within total enrolment in secondary education varied from 0 to 32 per cent. In some countries technical and vocational education has expanded in response to rapidly changing work place needs and increased demands for both initial and post-experience training. Such expansion has been accompanied by diversification in curricula and programmes, and by efforts to adapt to work-place requirements in the utilization of new technology. Changing national educational policies and structures, and perspectives regarding demand for and supply of technical manpower resulted in visible reductions in the share of technical/vocational education in the 1980s in several countries.

32. The total enrolment in higher education in the region more than doubled over the two decades 1970-1990, from 11 to almost 26 million, with an average annual growth rate of 4.2 per cent. In actual numbers, there was an acceleration in the 1980s when total enrolment increased by an estimated 8.7 million, as compared to 6 million in the 1970s. In Member States such as Japan, Australia and New Zealand with well developed higher education systems, the growth rate has been modest compared with countries such as the Republic of Korea, China and Thailand. In Australia, for example, the annual growth rate over the past decade has varied between 3 and 5 per cent, whereas in the Republic of Korea the annual growth rate from 1980 to 1990 was about 10 per cent. Female participation in higher education increased only slightly from 36.6 per cent in 1970 to 38 per cent in 1990. In most countries, women accounted for only about one-third of all students in higher learning institutions.

33. Education is a resource-intensive enterprise and the significant expansion in the size of education systems and improvements in quality have placed heavy demands on financial resources. Public expenditure in education, however, continued to stagnate in most countries, accounting for about 3 per cent of GNP for the developing countries of Asia as a whole. In many cases, public financial resources have

proved inadequate to meet even current needs.

34. To bridge the gap between educational needs and public sector revenue, there has been a growing trend towards increased dependence on financial contributions from individuals and the private sector, and on the stimulation of the development of private-sector institutions. This is particularly the case in higher education, where in many countries there have been increases in student tuition fees, efforts to ensure that students pay for services used and implementation of strategies to attract increased income and financial contributions through entrepreneurial activities and through attracting gifts from donors and alumni. A number of countries of the region, such as Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines and Thailand, have substantial private higher education sectors.

External assistance

35. Various multi- and bilateral donor agencies and international organizations have been active in the field of external assistance. The World Bank is providing assistance to primary education projects where high illiteracy rates and low levels of participation in primary education prevail. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supports major educational policy planning and management projects which help to ensure that primary education and literacy programmes receive due attention and an appropriate share of national resources. Frequently, UNDP funds technical assistance components of primary education projects supported by development banks. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) also has become a source of financial support to national activities, particularly as regards educational programmes for disadvantaged groups and early childhood care. Such activities often include primary education and literacy for mothers.

Management reforms

36. In many countries there have been significant attempts to strengthen educational management, both at system and at institutional levels. This has involved major administrative reorganizations including review and redefinition of policies, redesign of administrative structures and management roles, efforts to achieve significant management devolution, special programmes of management training and the introduction of modern computerized educational management information systems.

37. The introduction of educational management information systems promises significant advantages, especially in terms of achievement of increased efficiency, improved strategic planning and decision-making, and better monitoring of programmes and activities. The essential concept is to make more efficient and dynamic the process of collecting and transforming data into pertinent information that meets the needs of every level of educational management in assessing progress, in determining overall policy directions and in taking key decisions. Computerized management systems also are important for such functions as payroll, student records, stock inventories, financial records and examination results. This is a rapidly expanding area and many Member States have made progress in developing microcomputer-based educational management information systems. Since 1985 UNESCO has been involved in encouraging the sharing of experiences and know-how, and in providing direct technical assistance to small countries and island states.

Programmes and delivery systems

38. The past decade has seen impressive educational innovations across the region, particularly in instructional programmes and educational delivery systems. At school level this has included reform of examination systems, restructuring of curricula, introduction of non-graded classrooms, and improved educational materials and textbooks. In vocational and technical education, there have been numerous examples of the implementation of strategies to bring educational institutions and industry into closer working partnerships. In higher education, many of the countries of the region have expanded distance education delivery of courses and open universities.

Inter-country co-operation

39. Inter-country co-operation has increased and has led to significant joint innovative programmes, and to the sharing of expertise and experience. The last decade has seen the establishment of institutional networks and associations, programmes for the exchange of scholars and technical experts, student exchange programmes, training of personnel, and the sharing of educational materials and documentation. In this work, UNESCO and other international and regional agencies have played an important role. The most recent of these is the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (APEC) Education Forum.

Chapter II

EDUCATION FOR ALL: RENEWAL OFCOMMITMENT

40. Literacy has come to be recognized as an essential tool for bringing about basic changes in social and economic systems in order to empower people and to ensure a more equitable distribution of national wealth. APPEAL, launched in 1987 with the three-fold objectives of universal primary education, eradication of illiteracy and provision of continuing education programmes, is a recent successful initiative to deal with this problem. With a view to focusing the attention of the world community on the imperatives of dealing with mass illiteracy, the United Nations designated 1990 as International Literacy Year.

THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION FOR ALL

41. The World Conference on Education for All was extremely significant. Sponsored jointly by UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank, it brought together participants from all countries of the world, and representatives of teachers, non-governmental organizations, media and other relevant interest groups. The Conference adopted and endorsed respectively the World Declaration on Education for All and the Framework for Action. These not only spelt out the essential aspects of Education for All, but also specified the manner in which the achievement of Education for All goals should be monitored and evaluated. The Conference called for priority to be given to action at the national level, and appealed for a much greater contribution from the regional and international organizations, as well as from the donor agencies.

The Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, endorsed by the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990), suggested that countries set their own targets for the 1990s in terms of the following proposed dimensions:

1. Expansion of early childhood care and developmental activities, including family and community interventions, *especially* for poor, disadvantaged and disabled children;

2. Universal access to, and completion of, primary education (or whatever higher level of education is considered as 'basic') by the year 2000;

3. Improvement in learning achievement such that an agreed percentage of an appropriate age cohort (e.g., 80 per cent of 14 year-olds) attains or surpasses a defined level of necessary learning achievements;

4. Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) to, say, one-half its 1990 level by the year 2000, with sufficient emphasis on female literacy to significantly reduce the current disparity between male and female illiteracy rates;

5. Expansion of provisions of basic education and training in other essential skills required by youth and adults, with programme effectiveness assessed in terms of behavioural changes and impacts on health, employment and productivity;

6. Increased acquisition by individuals and families of the knowledge, skills and values required for better living and sound and sustainable development, made available through all education channels including the mass media, other forms of modern and traditional communication, and social action, with effectiveness assessed in terms of behavioural change.

Source: World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien, 1990, *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs*, New York, Inter-Agency Commission for the World Conference on Education for All, 1990, para. 8.

42. Action taken by Member States since the Jomtien Conference has been uneven. While some countries continue to depend on external resources and have not been able to make substantial commitments to basic education, others have accelerated their attempts at universalization of primary education and eradication of adult illiteracy. A few countries have developed excellent Education for All programmes, and some have taken significant initiatives to improve the quality of primary education. Practically all the countries of Asia-Pacific region have set up national co-ordinating mechanisms, prepared action plans for Education for All and developed new partnerships.

43. UNESCO and the other Education-for-All-sponsoring agencies have associated themselves closely with the efforts of Member States, particularly in the preparations of national action plans and in the training of literacy personnel. Training materials for literacy and post-literacy workers prepared under the auspices of APPEAL have been well received by the Member States and technical resource institutions. The Regional Coordination Meetings of APPEAL have provided an important forum for sharing experiences among Member States and have made useful suggestions to strengthen activities at national and regional levels. Several activities and projects aimed at improvement of the quality of primary education, particularly through more relevant teacher training and upgrading of science education, have been undertaken through APEID. UNESCO also has provided clearinghouse services for collecting, packaging and disseminating information on innovations and experiences in Education for All. In response to growing concern, efforts have been made to stimulate awareness of Education for All in population education, environmental education and AIDS education through appropriate mechanisms.

44. A recent development of significance is the interest shown in basic education by other inter-governmental and bilateral agencies. The sponsors of the Jomtien Conference, as well as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), have taken initiatives in developing Education for All projects and funding them. In order to take advantage of the opportunities thus provided, APPEAL has provided special assistance to six Member States which have a large incidence of illiteracy. Several bilateral funding agencies - such as the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA), the Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD), the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Australian Development Assistance Bureau (ADAB) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) - have come forward with special allocations of resources for Education for All. UNESCO's responsibilities regarding co-ordination in the development and implementation of these projects are becoming increasingly important.

BASIC EDUCATION: A PERSISTING CHALLENGE

45. The continuing problems of basic education in countries of the region are discussed in various reference documents. A brief summary of the current situation is provided below:

(i) *Early childhood care and education (ECCE).* Good quality child development programmes continue to remain confined to industrialized countries and well-to-do sections in other countries. There is insufficient co-ordination between ECCE and primary education.

(ii) *Primary education.* For the region as a whole there is an apparent capacity to enrol 373 million children, and the gross enrolment ratio has continued to increase, the situation in some countries (for instance Afghanistan, Bhutan, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Bangladesh) continues to be grave. It is estimated that the universalization of primary education would require substantial additional efforts in rationalizing school networks and in creating at least 100 million more primary school places before the year 2000. In some countries the gross enrolment ratio may be inflated due to administrative pressures on teachers and high incidence of enrolment of underage and overage children. In these countries, the problem is further exacerbated by high repetition and drop-out rates. A substantial proportion of children aged 14 and under are obliged to work and so are unable to attend school regularly. Organized alternative non-formal education programmes need to be expanded and improved in quality. Children with major disabilities constitute the second largest segment of educationally-disadvantaged groups - the social and educational needs of such children have not received the attention they deserve.

(iii) *Adult literacy.* The region is remarkable for wide variations in adult literacy. Six

countries have less than 50 per cent literacy (Afghanistan, Nepal, Pakistan, Cambodia, Bangladesh and Bhutan). India, China, Bangladesh and Pakistan account for 590 million illiterates out of the world's estimated number of 948 million. Although some significant initiatives have been taken in the post-Jomtien era and although countries which were fast moving towards a drastic reduction in the number of illiterates (such as China, Indonesia and the Philippines) continue to make rapid progress, the overall illiteracy picture is a major cause for concern. In addition, it is important to note that in many countries little has been achieved in terms of provision of comprehensive post-literacy work, continuing education and skill-development courses.

(iv) *Monitoring and evaluation*. The information systems for evaluating and monitoring Education for All and basic education need further development and strengthening in a number of countries. The quality of the data available for policy-decisions does not always meet national needs. At the same time there is an abundance of information collected which is not systematically organized for proper analysis and dissemination. Computerized management information systems, and reliable and up-to-date basic education statistics are prerequisites for appropriate monitoring of Education for All and basic education, as are relevant indicators of systems' performances which can be used for international and comparative purposes. UNESCO's recent initiatives to assist Member States in this field have been useful.

(v) *Measurement of levels of learning*. While it is important to assess the efficiency of any education system in terms of levels and quality of learning achieved by pupils, and the impact that learning has on the lives of the learners, their families and communities, only few countries in the region have the national capacities (local, provincial and/or central) to monitor the levels of learning. Since 1992 UNESCO has been assisting Member States in developing and strengthening national capacities to monitor levels of learning. A simple, workable monitoring methodology has been developed and tested in a number of countries. This experience can be extended to other Member States. In addition to the national capacity-building component, UNESCO may be able to provide further technical assistance to Member States in applying this monitoring methodology for carrying out international and comparative analyses.

CONSENSUS ON BASIC EDUCATION

46. Reports of recent conferences, research studies and other publications from UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank and UNDP have resulted in emergence of a consensus on different aspects of basic education. The main conclusions - about which there is now little difference of opinion - are set out below.

47. *Child development*. Early childhood care and education is now viewed by scientific and educational research as the first and essential stage of the basic education process. Recent world conferences testify to a growing appreciation of the crucial importance of the child's earliest years, and of the need to support families and communities in their role as the child's most influential educator. Improving children's health and nutrition is a first duty, but increasingly, in a situation where twelve out of thirteen of the world's children survive until the age of 1, governments and civil society are turning their attention to the psycho-social and cognitive development of children. There is ample evidence to show that healthy children who have experienced good pre-school programmes are much more likely to remain in primary school and achieve good results than are other children. In addition, countries that succeed in mobilizing local government, municipalities, communities and voluntary organizations in the care and education of very young children have been able to decentralize and innovate in their education systems and, at the same time, make an important contribution toward population information and the education of women.

48. *Primary education*. Effective primary education is the cornerstone of human development: investment in this area has high rate of return and constitutes a prerequisite for sustainable development. Traditionally the main concerns as regards primary education were enrolment and retention of children until they complete the primary level; today however it is realized that for primary education to have the impact expected, it must meet criteria with respect to access, participation, achievement and improvement of quality.

(i) *Access*. Provision of a school within a short walking distance is no longer regarded a guarantee of access to primary education. Concern is now focused on factors which prevent children from making effective use of a school facility: poverty, morbidity, and physical or mental disability. Children who must work during the day cannot benefit from availability of a regular school and Universal access therefore now implies enabling families and children to overcome these difficulties. In appropriate cases, such with disabled and working children, provision of alternate or non-formal educational facilities are now taken as indispensable.

(ii) *Participation*. The traditional emphasis on children staying in school until they complete primary education continues; however, regularity of attendance and active participation in the learning process are now being stressed as well.

(iii) *Improvement* of quality. Increasingly determining certain desired - or at least minimum - levels of learning is assuming importance. Growing research evidence shows that attention to certain areas leads to substantial increase in school effectiveness: (a) relevance of curricula and their regular overhaul to ensure coherence and that material is appropriately paced; (b) adequacy of learning materials, such as textbooks, learning aids and teacher's guides; (c) better use of instructional time; (d) improvements in the quality of teaching, mainly through in-service teacher training; and (e) making primary education child-centred, caring for the health and interests of the children. There is thus a good case for policy orientations and actions in this critical area.

49. *Adult literacy*. Because literacy is seen more and more as an aid to social and economic development, increased emphasis is being given to the younger age-group of the adult population - those in the productive and reproductive stage of life. The various strategies for extending literacy among adults include (a) priority to universalization of primary education with a view to limiting increases in the absolute number of adult illiterates; (b) selective approaches with systematic targeting of particular groups, such as farmers, artisans and industrial workers, and incorporating literacy training in occupational life; and (c) the organization of mass campaigns along with building a supportive culture to engender motivation among learners and instructors.

Re-learning old skills

Literacy and basic education programmes which include re-learning forgotten skills can prove very succesful, as the following examples demonstrate. All involve training craftsmen in techniques which were once common.

A workshop on carpet weaving was organized as part of a basic education project for returning Afghan refugees. The workshop (Mazár-i-Sharif, 1990) was concerned with reviving traditional designs and the techniques of vegetable dyeing, thereby providing returning refugees with income-generating skills. The handbook on carpet weaving prepared in Dari and Turkman serves both as instruction for carpet weaving and as reading material for new literates. UNESCO's Co-action programme provided looms.

This activity was so successful that in 1991 it was followed by a workshop on Ikat weaving, also held in Mazár-i-Sharif. A handbook similar to that on carpet weaving has been pruduced, and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has produced a radio programme about the workshop.

In a similar line, a UNESCO project in the Lao People's Democratic Republic has been combining literacy, basic education and traditional Tai Dam and Tai Lue techniques of weaving silk and cotton. Through reviving traditional vegetable dyeing and weaving techniques combined with literacy and commercial skills, the project has revived a forgotten piece of culture and provided literacy plus income-generating skills.

50. Rudimentary literacy tends to impart a false sense of achievement and there is a worldwide awareness that in fact at this level literacy scarcely affects the quality of life, particularly in a non-literate environment. Educational planners and literacy experts are therefore now insisting on well-defined levels in basic skills for all students. Emphasis also is being laid on self-reliance, linking literacy with occupational training and with scientific and technological literacy.

51. *Post-literacy and continuing education.* It is well known that literate adults and youths who have received basic education are much more likely to apply their literacy skills if their working and living environments encourage this. The problem of retention of competence in basic skills and their application is particularly serious in countries where primary education lasts only four or five years, where literacy campaigns attempt to impart basic literacy in the shortest possible time and where the levels of achievement in primary education and literacy programmes are low.

52. There is growing awareness that without appropriate follow-up programmes investment in basic education, particularly in literacy campaigns, can be wasteful and frustrating. What is required are programmes which are viewed as relevant by the learners - based on materials such as literature on health and child-care, folk tales, current affairs, occupational information, religious books, etc. Institutional arrangements are important, including provision of part-time certification courses, libraries, women's clubs, tele-viewing centres, distance learning, etc. More importance is now being given to skills- training programmes relating to health and family planning, agriculture and animal husbandry, new crafts and activities which generate income.

53. *Women's and girls' education.* As shown in the statistical review (ED-93/MINEDAP/REF.2), countries with low levels of educational achievement face an important gap between male and female participation in education. Indeed, many argue that the principal aspect of the challenge of basic education is education of women and girls, and that progress in basic education should be measured in terms of reductions in gender disparity. Several solutions have come to be widely accepted: separate schools for girls where the local culture so demands, provision of incentives such as scholarships, and free textbooks and stationary, and more women teachers. Easier access to schooling up to secondary level for girls is essential to address the needs of women and girls.

54. In recent years a more holistic view of the problem of women's and girls' basic education has been taken. It is recognized, for example, that many women are unable to benefit from educational facilities owing to the need to take care of small children and to burdensome home duties such as the collecting of drinking water, fuel and food. Progress in basic education depends on efforts which deal with these wider issues. The social and cultural perception of the place of women in society and women's own self-image is equally important.

EDUCATION FOR ALL IS FOR ALL COUNTRIES

55. It would be erroneous to assume that Education for All is not a matter of importance for countries which have achieved universal primary education and where there is practically no adult illiteracy, or for those who have received basic education in the countries where achievement in this sphere is unsatisfactory. For these, effective Education for All should highlight the development of an increased understanding of productive processes and work ethics in order to help enhance productivity and contribute to the progress of the nation, work place and the family. As regards the workforce, programmes should provide and enhance skills to cope with economic and technology challenges. For the vast body of unemployed and under-employed youth, major emphasis should be given to vocational training relevant to the needs of sectors in which employment opportunities are increasing or likely to increase. Continuing education should be designed to enable people to contribute more effectively to social and cultural development, to safeguard human rights and women's dignity, and to increase concern for conservation of the environment and for population control.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

56 The Conference may wish to address inter alia the following key issues:

(i) *Preparation of national plans.* Discussion here could consider four questions: (a) What is the appropriate duration of primary education? Research findings show that duration of schooling has an important bearing on quality and that unless facilities up to the pre-secondary school level are available locally most girls may find it impossible to continue their education. (b) How are targets formulated and time frames fixed for their achievement? (c) How are community participation and partnerships ensured? (d) How can national plans be financed? Plans should specify resources available from the community and government.

(ii) *External assistance.* The key issue here would appear to be how external resources can be mobilized. Agencies providing such funds are conscious about the need to build endogenous capacity but a variety of factors may work to hinder realization of their goal. Appropriate procedures and work styles need to be developed that ensure that projects for external funding are nationally and locally relevant.

(iii) *Education for All basic education monitoring and measurement of levels of learning.* The Conference may wish to look into the development of information and indicators systems for evaluation and monitoring Education for All and basic education, and the development of national capacities to measure learning achievements.

(iv) *Education for working children and women.* Topics here could include provision of learning opportunities for working children, enhancement of educational opportunities for women and girls, and intervention to facilitate changing attitudes about the place of women in the family, the work place and society.

(v) *Adult-literacy, post-literacy and continuing education.* Discussion of this area could concern itself with (a) means of generating greater awareness about its importance, (b) measures needed to develop increased expertise in programme planning, (c) strategies for developing appropriate literature and texts, (d) the use of formal education institutions to provide assistance, (e) research and experimentation, and (f) earmarking of resources and drawing attention to the need for external funding to realize the full potential of such programmes.

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Chapter III

CHANGING DEMANDS ON EDUCATION: MEETING THE CHALLENGES

57. In the past, the education systems and institutions of the countries of the region have made great efforts to meet the needs of their societies and to respond to major societal issues and problems. In so doing, it has frequently been necessary to review and redefine the role of education itself, and the mission of particular educational institutions. Today a number of urgent issues and problems demand attention, and may well require substantial review of the role of education and redefinition of its future development. How effectively education leaders and the education community as a whole respond to these major challenges will have a direct effect on the quality of life and future development of the region.

MAJOR CONCERNS

Population growth

58. Almost two-thirds of the world's population - 3,400 million - is to be found in the Asia and the Pacific region, squeezed into less than one-quarter of the earth's land mass. The region's population is growing at the rate of 1.7 per cent per year; growth rates differ from country to country, the highest rates tending to be in countries with the largest populations and with less advanced economies. In Southern Asia in particular the growth rate is in excess of 2.2 per cent per year.

59. Continued population growth presents major problems for economic growth and for tackling problems such as poverty and need to improve health services and the adequate provision of food. Sustained population growth also places great strain on infrastructure and on the provision of human services.

Quality of life

60. One basic concern of Member States is to maintain and improve the quality of life of their people. While the exact meaning of quality of life varies among different societies, some basic elements are generally accepted: a reasonable life expectancy, adequate food and nutrition, basic housing and clothing, adequate income and meaningful employment, access to health and education services, and ability to participate in community life and cultural pursuits.

61. Despite impressive economic development over the past decade, poverty remains a major problem in the region. According to UNDP 42 per cent of the population in South Asia and 11 per cent in East and South-East Asia live below the poverty line (UNDP, 1991, p. 29). Poverty is often associated with low education standards and lack of relevant employment skills. Poverty directly affects the quality of life, especially access to nutritious food, good housing and quality health services.

The crisis in human values

62. It is increasingly recognized that the rapid economic development of part of the region, growing economic interdependence, the explosion of knowledge and information flow, and changing life styles caused by the advancement of technology are causing profound changes throughout Asia and the Pacific. Value systems of individuals, families and communities are thus experiencing rapid changes and human values are becoming less and less important.

63. The crisis is at both the individual level and the societal level. Traditionally human values have found their expression in individual and collective acts; in this century however they are becoming increasingly moral tests of societal action. Education is by its very nature concerned with values and the crisis of values thus is an educational crisis as well.

Health and drug problems

64. Across the countries of the region, there is increased concern about the provision of appropriate quality health services and about developing more efficient ways of dealing with particular health and drug problems.

65. Longevity is one of the main elements of human development. A UNDP study shows that life expectancy in developing countries is still twelve years less than that in developed countries. Affordable access to basic food and nutrition, and to adequate health services are vital to human development. The reality is that one-sixth of the people in developing countries still go hungry everyday; 150 million children under 5 (one in three) suffer from serious malnutrition; 1,500 million people are still deprived of primary health care; and 1,700 million still do not

have access to sources of safe drinking water. The majority of these people are living in the Asia and the Pacific region.

66. The threat and spread of HIV/AIDS have reached pandemic proportions and its impact throughout the world is of unprecedented magnitude. Widespread transmission and rapid spread has been noted within parts of the Asia and the Pacific region. The World Health Organization projects that by the mid-1990s more Asians than Africans will be newly infected. In the absence of a vaccine, education for the prevention of behaviours that lead to infection with HIV/AIDS is essential. Specifically, the provision of HIV/AIDS education for prevention within the school curriculum is a priority. To facilitate this, the education and training of decision-makers in Ministries of Education regarding the importance of this is seen as imperative. The first training course of this nature, organized by UNESCO, is to be held from 29 November to 3 December 1993 in New Delhi, India. To date an established support in the area of HIV/AIDS education in the region is the AIDSED centre at UNESCO's Principal Regional Office in Asia and the Pacific (PROAP), Bangkok. This is a regional resource centre for the collection, analysis and distribution of educational materials for the prevention of AIDS.

Environmental degradation

67. As more and more people see that degradation of the natural environment may bring about an irreversible change in our way of life, concern about the environment has assumed major importance throughout the world. For the region, the most serious environmental problems are deforestation, air and water pollution, floods and landslides, reduction of biological diversity and particular problems associated with urban life in large cities. There is growing concern in the region about global warming and the depletion of the ozone layer.

68. Countries of the region face a major challenge in helping to achieve sustainable development based on their past experience, the current state of the environment and future plans. According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), 'sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED, 1987, p. 40). In the words of WCED Chairman Gro Harlem Brundtland, 'the "environment" is where we all live; and "development" is what we all do in attempting to improve our lot within that abode. The two are inseparable' (WCED, 1987, p. xi). Sustainable development implies that the needs of particular countries should be met without compromising the ability of other countries to meet their own needs. Environmental education for sustainable development is a highly needed measure for promoting and integrating the philosophy, goals and objectives, concepts and strategies for sustainable development into the teaching learning process for all types and levels of education.

PROGRAMMES AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS

Pre-school and primary education

69. As evidence accumulates about the importance of pre-school education's major role in promoting cognitive development and the acquisition of values, a number of countries are seeking to forge more effective linkages between pre-school and primary education. The goal is for children to enter formal education with a solid foundation for learning already laid both by experience in the home and through pre-school education.

70. For many children, formal education begins and ends with primary education. It is at this stage that they must be equipped to confront problems of poverty, to improve the quality of life, and to develop individual and social values. It is clear from research that most out-of-school children come from disadvantaged groups. Furthermore even when children from disadvantaged groups are enrolled, their learning and retention rates are often low, frequently resulting in relapse into illiteracy. Thus, while education for all is indispensable for the region, it has to be recognized that this goal can only be achieved if special attention is focused on the educationally disadvantaged - including those suffering disabilities - who must be brought into the educational mainstream. Such emphasis is most urgently needed at the primary level, but should also extend to secondary and vocational education

Street libraries in Manilla

Books are coming to the streets of Manilla, and with them, thanks to Movement ATD Fourth World and UNESCO, 'street librarians'.

The street libraries are aimed at creating an environment in the poorest districts of Manilla in which everyone is encouraged to learn, in which both children and parents have access to knowledge without disruption to their daily routine.

ADT Fourth World and UNESCO have conceived their pilot project to train 'street librarians' how to run their libraries and, more important still, to instil in them an understanding of what the street libraries represent for children and their families. For it is the children, excluded from school and literacy, who must find their access to learning through the street libraries, bringing with them the adults.

The future 'street librarians' are students at the University of the Philippines and volunteers eager to share their knowledge, to show the marginalized children of Manilla that they too can learn. They will be trained by members of ATD Fourth World's Filipino volunteers, and some of the children and parents with whom they will later work will participate actively in the training.

Secondary education

71. With Education for All gaining momentum, there will be a growing pressure for the expansion of secondary education which will have to enrol a larger proportion of the age-cohort completing primary schooling. Education systems will have to respond by expanding and by reforming. Education will be called upon to become more relevant to life, capable of accommodating a more diverse student population.

72. While secondary schools prepare some young people for higher education, they constitute the terminal level of education for the vast majority of their students; in many countries they provide the pool from which the bulk of the skilled manpower for national development has to be selected. Further education and training may be needed several times during working life. This in turn means that primary and secondary studies must provide a solid general education, including elements such as enterprise skills, so that individuals can contribute to their societies, and ensure its sustainable growth and development. It is in this perspective that a system-wide reform of secondary education, based upon research and experience, must be carried out.

Higher education

73. Higher education in the region confronts numerous and sometimes conflicting challenges. There is a growing demand for access as more and more students finish secondary studies and an increasing proportion of them seeks entry into tertiary institutions. At the same time the quality, relevance and content of the programmes are being called into question. Expansion, diversification, innovation, curriculum reform, material production and programme delivery are being called for at a rate which tries the capacity of institutions to respond.

74. The contribution of universities and colleges to the universalization of primary education and the eradication of illiteracy often remains limited. Another problem lies in the frequent mismatch between the supply of graduates and the manpower needs of agriculture, industry and commerce.

75. Institutional pursuit of quality is dependent on excellence in teaching and research, and on the quality of faculty and students. New initiatives and reforms are under way, such as inter-institutional co-operation for cost saving and resource sharing, use of domestically produced equipment, university and industry linkages, mobility of scholars and students and open university structures. UNESCO has launched Project UNITWIN as an innovative approach to inter-university co-operation and networking in key areas related to sustainable development. These initiatives and reform measures should be further promoted and supported through regional and international co-operation.

Teacher education

76. Schools are no better than their teachers. If the

quality of education is to improve, the training of more competent and educated teachers must become a priority programme. In many countries, major system-level initiatives in curriculum development and teaching methods will create an even greater need for better trained and educated teachers.

77. But even before training begins, suitable candidates must be attracted to the teaching profession. One major problem is the low level of teachers' salaries which acts as a disincentive in the attempt to attract able and promising young women and men into the teaching profession. Owing to the shortage of trained teachers, a great number of unqualified teachers are often assigned to teach in remote rural areas and slum communities where in fact the need for able teachers is greatest. Thus the gap between the children of the rich and the poor is further widened.

78. Because distance education enables teachers to study without having to leave their teaching assignment, it has become a popular mode of upgrading teacher qualifications. It is also used successfully for sustaining professional growth of teachers. However, many countries do not yet have the appropriate level of specialized technical expertise in setting up and operationing teacher education via distance education. The potential of distance education should be more fully exploited to improve the quality of teachers, perhaps through regional and sub-regional co-operation.

Technical and vocational education

79. Technical and vocational education in this region is going through a period of intensive change and reorientation. A multiplicity of national models, forms and structures have emerged in an effort to cope with rapid technological advancements and the changing needs of the labour market. Nevertheless the need for closer collaboration between education and the world of work has yet to be fully recognized. Effective liaison with industry, agriculture and business enterprises needs to be further developed.

80. The application of new technologies by the work force is a major challenge for the whole education system; technical and vocational education which prepares manpower for more key areas of the economy is particularly concerned. Curricula now emphasize multi-skilling, interfacing education and productive enterprises, entrepreneurship and continuing education. All this requires courses on offer to be adjusted frequently as a function of innovations and changes in work-place requirements.

81. There is an urgent need to revitalize technical and vocational education in order to align it more effectively with the world of work and thereby contribute to increased productivity and improved competitiveness. Networking selected institutions in different areas of specialization would allow the pooling and sharing of available experience. The Conference might wish to consider a regional project linked with UNEVOC as a means of improving access to high quality vocational education and training. Such a project could strengthen national capacities, foster demand-focused approaches through close linkage with industry, agriculture and business, and improve mechanisms designed to match the supply and demand of manpower.

Non-formal education

82. Non-formal education is a widely-used means for democratizing education. Its immediate targets in the region are the 700 million adult illiterates and the 55 million primary school-aged children who are not currently in school. Non-formal education continues to be focused on the continuing education and the training of more than 2,000 million adults, with the wider aim of launching a process of human development and alleviation of poverty. Non-formal education is learner-centred rather than teacher-centred; admission requirements are usually flexible and content is task-related.

83. A crucial strategy in many countries for empowering the poor and the educationally disadvantaged, successful non-formal education is need-based and demand-driven; it often builds on development initiatives from the people themselves. In order to ensure that inter-sectoral and inter-agency co-operation takes place at grassroots level, preparation of appropriate national plans and co-ordination mechanisms, and careful evaluation of present strategies will be necessary for some countries. Regional exchange of experiences through UNESCO can provide valuable input for such initiatives.

Enterprise education

84. The directions that societies are taking demand greater competence in planning, problem-solving and communicating on the part of all citizens, be they workers, consumers or managers. It follows from this that one of the tasks of education is to

contribute to the development of individuals who are more 'enterprising', which in turn implies the development of qualities and proficiencies which enable individuals to be more flexible, more creative and readily adaptive to a rapidly changing environment.

85. Entrepreneurial experience is obviously an excellent way to acquire enterprise skills. Unfortunately, in countries where these skills are most needed entrepreneurial experience is limited and few young people can be accommodated. Thus it is up to schools to provide opportunities for such learning. These skills are not limited to making money; in conditions of poverty they involve learning how to survive. Although new curricula increasingly reflect objectives and operational specifications related to problem-solving and critical thinking, the initiatives often are limited to science education. Their extension to other learning areas is of crucial importance. Particularly relevant for extension of these approaches are courses in the social sciences.

International education

86. Today the nations of the world are becoming increasingly inter-dependent, a fact which makes international education aimed at promoting international understanding and co-operation more important than ever before. UNESCO's programmes emphasize reinforcement of the humanistic, cultural and international dimensions of education, and study of different cultures and their reciprocal influences in order to encourage mutual appreciation of the differences between them. At present, the Associated Schools Project has 487 participating schools in twenty-one countries in the region (177 primary schools, 256 secondary schools and 54 teacher-training institutions).

87. As a follow-up to UNESCO activities in this area, the Conference may wish to consider the opportunity of supporting further development of curricula, textbooks and other learning materials on international education as well as programmes for staff development. Reinforcing the Associated Schools Project could also be considered, as well as a regional input to the preparation for the 44th session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) whose theme will be Educational Reforms: Appraisal and Perspectives with Special Emphasis on the 1974 Recommendation on International Education.

Values education

88. Member States of the region have expressed serious concern on this issue regarding values education in the past decade. Recommendation 19 of the Fourth Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and Oceania (MINEDASO IV; Colombo, 1978) underlined the significance of obtaining a balance between materialistic progress and moral, ethical and cultural attainment, and MINEDAP V (Bangkok, 1985) recommended incorporating moral, civic and political subjects in education in the context of new nation building (Recommendation 18). Moral values were continuously emphasized in the discussion and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Regional Co-operation in Education in Asia and the Pacific in most of their sessions.

89. The APEID workplan for 1987-1991 states that

There is also a conflict between traditional values and modern life style. Traditional cultural values have had little time to adjust to certain attributes of modernization. Planners of moral education curricula then are faced with the problem of identifying values and character traits that will best equip the individual to take his place in modern society. In the area of curriculum and instruction the issues are whether moral education should be taught as an independent subject or an integrated subject and whether direct preaching or indirect approaches such as the use of discussions, case studies, models and analysis of situations should be employed. (APEID..., 1987, p. 112).

90. The Asian Centre of Educational Innovation for Development (ACEID), supported by the National Institute for Educational Research (NIER), Japan, has initiated several regional activities and contributed to ensuring an exchange of experiences to develop strategies and curriculum frameworks. ACEID could make a major input to the work of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century on the basis of the experience.

Population education

91. In co-operation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and concerned Member States, UNESCO has been carrying out population

education programmes in the region for the past two decades. Over the years, population education has gained acceptance as an important part of the school curriculum and of non-formal education programmes in most countries of the region. The Conference may wish to consider the need for sustained effort in this field to meet new challenges in terms of conceptualization, consolidation and institutionalization posed by emerging population-related problems such as AIDS, adolescent fertility and environmental deterioration. Present and future needs call for on-going revision of population education programmes.

92. The serious degradation of the environment discussed earlier is largely due to universal, irresponsible treatment of the resources of Earth. During the first half of 1992, two important international events took place which focused on the earth as an integrated system: Revisit Planet Earth, sponsored within the framework of International Space Year, and the UNCED, or the Earth Summit. One matter on which all governments agreed was the importance of increasing environmental education, public awareness and training to bring about effective action to achieve the goals endorsed by UNCED. This was recognized as a major challenge to all education systems and it was agreed that many educational programmes should be developed to respond to this challenge. However, environmental education in the region must not be limited to a general consideration of the sum of environmental problems in the world; it must also deal with problems peculiar to the region such as deforestation, monocultures and the loss of indigenous species, tourist pollution and the environmental problems peculiar to large cities in tropical climates.

93. Inter-agency co-ordination and collaboration at national and international levels - in the spirit of the Jomtien Conference, UNCED and the Istanbul Declaration of the International Congress on Population Education and Development (ICPED; April 1993) - are very important. The region will need to be intimately involved in the conceptualization and implementation of UNESCO's proposed interdisciplinary project on 'Environment and Population Education and Information for Human Development'.

PROJECT 2000+: AN INTERNATIONAL PROJECT ON SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL LITERACY FOR ALL

Some 200 participants - science and technology educators, and government-sponsored officials involved in national Education for All programmes - will meet in Paris at an international forum to examine ways of seeking the development of scientific and technological literacy for all, paying attention to formal, non-formal and informal educational opportunities in six focus areas:

- The need for scientific and technological literacy
- Scientific and technological literacy for development
- The teaching and learning environment for scientific and technological literacy
- Teacher education and leadership for scientific and technological literacy
- Assessment and evaluation for scientific and technological literacy
- Non-formal and informal development of scientific and technological literacy.

Participants will discuss the six areas with a view to: issuing statements to affect political visibility for science and technology education for all as a requirement for both individual and national development; providing a framework for major programmes of action in science and technology education involving governments, intergovernmental organizations and especially non-governmental organizations; and developing guidelines for designing, implementing and evaluating projects to enhance basic education for all in the area of scientific and technological literacy.

Science and technology education

94. Science and technology education can contribute both to economic and social development and to the formation of human personality. Successful application of science and technology is necessary for the sustainable economic growth of a country, requiring a high level of input from well-trained scientific and technological experts who studied both within the region and in international centres of excellence. However these experts cannot contribute their expertise without the backing of a scientifically literate work force. The Jomtien Conference emphasized the necessity of having a literate and a scientifically literate population, and thus a scientifically-literate work force, without which some countries of the region face a major restriction on sustainable development. Endogenous scientific and technological capacities can be strengthened through manpower training programmes with high-level science, mathematics and technology components, and through the creation of a strong research and development system. Project 2000+, an international project on scientific and technological literacy for all, is now in the preparatory stages. An international forum will be held next month in Paris, 5-10 July, in order to permit worldwide exchange of knowledge and ideas, and create a firm commitment to scientific and technological literacy for all. Project 2000+ aims to provide a framework for efforts to extend the benefits of scientific literacy to all sectors of the population through both in-school and out-of-school teaching methods.

95. Planning education for the future must anticipate the use of multi-media information processing technology in the teaching-learning process. However if this technology is available only in a few élite schools it will tend to widen the gap in educational opportunities between the children of the élite and the children of the poor, who may constitute the bulk of the population in some developing countries in the region. In turn this gap may threaten the quest for equity in educational opportunity within countries and between countries in the region, especially between the developed and developing countries. New approaches to the planning of education are needed if all children in the region are to have access to the benefits of using modern learning technology.

GENERAL ISSUES

Educational policies, management and reform of systems

96. In the light of the socio-economic transformation of the last decade and the rapid development of science and technology, a number of Member States in the region have conducted reviews of their educational policies and these in turn have led to reform. The goals of education are societal goals that extend beyond the sectoral boundary of education. The experiences of Member States in 1980s have shown that in-depth review of educational policies by the appropriate authority is a very important step towards the initiation of educational reforms. These reviews are best carried out by teams including prominent personalities from different walks of life, thereby ensuring that the bodies entrusted with the task of conducting policy reviews are widely representative.

97. In 1987 the National Council on Educational Reform in Japan addressed itself to a number of issues such as: basic requirements for an education relevant to the twenty-first century; organization and systematization of lifelong learning; strengthening of higher education; enrichment and diversification of elementary and secondary education; coping with internationalization; coping with the information age; and a review of educational administrative and finance.

98. The major principles of educational reform adopted in 1985 by the Presidential Commission for Educational Reform for the Twenty-first Century of the Republic of Korea were education to nurture national pride, balanced intellectual and physical development, development of creativity, future-oriented education, pursuit of excellence, promotion of diversity, enhancement of autonomy, humanization of educational environment and strengthening of society's educational function.

99. China introduced reform by The Communist Party Central Committee Resolution on the Reform of Education System of 1985 and The Law of Compulsory Education of the Republic of China of 1986, which extended compulsory schooling to nine years, diversified vocational education involving various segments of society, restructured secondary education, underlined moral education and shifted responsibilities of developing and financing elementary and secondary education to local authorities. In 1988, the National Higher Education Conference introduced measures to rationalize and improve the quality of higher education.

100. The reform of education in India was initiated by the Challenge of Education - a Policy Perspective,

which reflected views and suggestions of a wider public, and reinforced by the National Policy on Education - 1986, which aimed to tackle the accumulated problems of quality, quantity, utility and the financial outlay of the existing schooling, emphasizing empowerment of women and access to education for disadvantaged sections of the society, educationally backward minorities and the disabled. The policy acknowledged that the school system cannot reach all children and gave impetus to the launching of a large-scale programme of non-formal education.

101. Thailand initiated the reform process with by Directions for Future Educational Development in Thailand (1988) which stressed the importance of literacy for all, compulsory education of nine years, improved teaching in science, math, etc., high quality manpower training at universities, revision of content and processes of the formal and non-formal education systems, and increased participation of private sector in educational provision.

102. New Zealand introduced a most significant reform of education in 1989. Based on a model devised by the Picot Taskforce, it involved decentralizing the planning and management of education to institutional level. The institutions became the basic 'building block' of educational administration which controls their educational resources and which is managed by a partnership of professionals and the particular community in which it is located. Community education forums were established as places of debate, involving the participation of students, parents, teachers, managers or educational administrators in educational policy orientation.

103. Indonesia has also undertaken important reform when the National Education Law of 1989 replaced the original 1950 legislation. The new law affirmed the government's commitment to provide lifelong learning opportunities in formal, non-formal and informal settings, expanded basic education from six to nine years, took measures to improve higher education and made educational activities the joint responsibility of parents, communities and government.

104. The Philippines in 1989 reformed the funding of education by passing the Free High School law, which guaranteed free education through high school to all Philippines children and state responsibility for a portion of students' cost for private secondary and higher education.

105. The education programmes of Malaysia of the 1980s moved from the preoccupation with the academic qualitative development of the past decade towards the qualitative, holistic and integrated development of individuals. The Cabinet Committee Report of 1979 recommended an education concerned with inter alia achieving national unity in a multi-national society; manpower development and a balanced development of rural and urban education. In response to this recommendation, the New Primary School Curriculum was introduced in 1983, and in 1989 the new integrated curriculum covered the form 1 of the secondary level. The reform placed a strong emphasis on inculcating moral values to safeguard against the social decay.

106. Several South Pacific countries, including Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, Western Samoa and Tuvalu, developed a mechanism of sub-regional co-operation, introducing their own education certificate, and established the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA) to supervise final year high school examinations.

107. These educational reform efforts of the Member States of the region go beyond literacy and the universalization of primary education to broader issues such as education for twenty-first century, lifelong learning, human resource development, modernization, culture and values, the environment and information technology. There is also an increasing appreciation of the need for greater decentralization of managerial authority and for a greater degree of local planning and financing of education. The sources of educational funds are increasingly diversified and the private sector has come to play more important role in the national education particularly at the secondary level. UNESCO has contributed directly to the reform efforts through sector analysis and policy reviews (in for instance Viet Nam, Myanmar and Maldives).

108. In the last few years Member States which suffered destruction by armed combat have been reconstructing their education systems with the encouragement and support of other Member States. UNESCO co-operated closely with the authorities and other United Nations agencies in reconstructing the education systems of Afghanistan and Cambodia.

109. In order to empower education and to enable it to play a more influential role in development, new sets of values and modes must be developed for coping with new and emerging changes and needs in our societies. Such values and modes must be backed

by innovation, research and experimentation. Educational research and innovation have the capacity to shape the future of education in the Member States of UNESCO. For some years UNESCO has promoted and supported educational research and innovation in the region through such programmes as APEID and APPEAL; Educational Planning and Management; and the Regional Co-operative Programme in Higher Education for Development in Asia and the Pacific. The Conference may wish to discuss the possible reorienting of these programmes, and ways and means of strengthening them to focus on the unmet and changing needs which influence the substance and forms of education in the region.

Education facilities development

110. In the region, schools are under severe pressure to provide additional space in response to growing enrolment demands. The situation is frequently aggravated further by declining government expenditure on education. Owing to rapid enrolment expansion and new requirements of teaching programmes in particular fields such as science and technology, universities and colleges too are under pressure to provide additional buildings, teaching space and laboratories.

111. UNESCO has co-operated with the Member States in the generation of new knowledge and the transfer of knowledge to field conditions, and in the development of national capabilities as regards educational facilities. As the push for Education for All accelerates, educational facilities will be required to cater to a variety of learning needs and teaching requirements. With growing environmental concern about energy saving and recycling of material resources, educational facilities should be designed to be cost-effective and environment-friendly. As many countries of the region are prone to natural calamities, appropriate technology needs to be developed to cope with such disasters. National governments need increased capacity to efficiently design and construct facilities required by new learning requirements and further increases in enrolments and to provide for multiple uses wherever possible.

Quality and quality assurance and how to maintain it

112. Internationally, there is a major push for education systems to improve the quality of their programmes. Education programmes today must be of high quality and relevant if they are to meet the complex needs of individuals, employers and society as a whole. Improving quality in education requires adequate resources, competent teachers, appropriate facilities, and modern textbooks, materials and methods. Efficient planning and management, both at system and local-site levels, and a commitment to the idea of quality are needed if quality education is to be achieved and maintained.

113. Associated with this pressure for improved quality in education is a perceived need for appropriate quality assurance mechanisms. In many countries in the region there is already increased use of standardized achievement tests, external reviews of institutions and programmes, external examiners, management performance indicators and audits of course accreditation procedures in the case of higher education institutions. One important result of the quality assurance movement has been the growing attention accorded to the output of education systems and institutions in contrast to the previous preoccupation with input. On the other hand, inappropriate use of standardized tests and performance indicators may distort the goals of education, especially in relation to the development of qualities other than cognitive academic achievement. Review of existing arrangements and exchange of information about experiences in the design and implementation of new forms of quality assurance mechanisms could be of benefit for Member States of the region.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

114. The Conference may wish to examine some of the key issues identified in this chapter:

(i) *Objectives of education and national policies*: conceiving new sets of values and modes to enable education to play a potent role in development; reviewing and redefining the role of education and the mission of particular institutions to meet changing societal needs and respond to particular major problems; contribution of regional inputs to the International Commission on Education for the Twenty first Century.

(ii) *Educational programmes and structures*: bringing innovations into curricula structures and delivery systems based on adequate research and experimentation and taking due account of human values and the quality of life; undertaking system wide reform of secondary education together with revitalization of technical and vocational education; regional mechanism for ensuring the quality of higher education and co operation.

(iii) *Special educational programmes*: promoting and reinforcing special educational programmes, particularly to meet environment and health needs and problems related to population growth, drugs, conflicting values and, above all, programmes for women and girls, and other disadvantaged groups.

(iv) *Efficiency in education*: improving the efficiency in education systems - both internal and external - through better planning and management; rethinking the options for financing education; reform of teacher education; greater decentralization and greater participation of private sector; establishment of appropriate management information systems, by use of advanced technology; regional assessment, monitoring and indicator systems.

115. **Finally, the Conference may wish to suggest how policy analyses and reviews can best be conducted.**

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Chapter IV

INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

THE CHANGING INTERNATIONAL SCENE

116. Dramatic political, economic and social changes are taking place in the world and a new era of international understanding and co-operation at the global level is emerging. The peace dividend may in future be used for the purposes of promoting human welfare - including education - especially for those who are disadvantaged. International co-operation promises to foster peace and solidarity among nations, and to ensure continued progress in all aspects of human life. Nevertheless, poverty and under-development continue to persist in many parts of the world.

117. UNESCO has continuously promoted the concept of people-centred development. Of late, there has been a shift in development strategy in general towards human development and away from development per se. UNICEF signaled a warning on the danger of human alienation in the process of structural adjustment by advocating adjustment with human face, and more recently development with human face. UNDP too has shown concern for human deprivation and launched a new series of human development indicators. These are a welcome sign for all those concerned with education.

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

118. International Literacy Year 1990 and the Jomtien . Conference provided governments, international agencies and non-governmental organizations with the opportunity to renew their commitment to promote literacy and basic education for all. The 42nd Session of ICE reaffirmed the resolution shown by the Jomtien Conference. The World Summit for Children called the attention of the world leaders to the importance of a basic aspect of human development - the well-being of children. UNCED was a culminating point for these concerns, highlighting the need for harmonious co-existence of human beings and nature.

119. These international consultations and their consequent influence on policies and strategies at national level have created a new setting in favour of international co-operation for development. The commitments of the major funding agencies, especially UNDP, UNICEF, the World Bank and ADB, to support national endeavours to achieve the goals of education have been important. Many other multilateral and bilateral donors have also been increasing their support. There is also an increasing involvement of non-governmental organizations, especially grassroots groups, as a force for solidarity and action for development.

120. In the light of the experience gained over the last several decades, a conspicuous shift in the form of co-operation among United Nations agencies has been taking place. This shift is seen in the United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/211 which assigns responsibility for the design and management of assistance to governments. As a result, UNDP and other agencies have taken policy decisions emphasizing 'national execution' and a broader 'programme approach'.

REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

121. UNESCO has played a major role in promoting regional co-operation in education. Such activities have facilitated strong inter-action among Member States of the region to realize common goals.

122. The forum of policy-level consultation in the form of conferences of ministers of education and those responsible for economic planning is an effective mechanism of regional co-operation, providing timely and substantive guidance on the priorities and content of regional co-operation. Three major regional programmes have emerged directly from the recommendations of MINEDAP Conferences, namely APEID, APPEAL and the Regional Co-operative Programme in Higher Education for Development. At the same time, UNESCO has carried out regional programmes in educational planning and management, educational facilities development, technical and vocational education, and population education. These various programmes have attracted considerable external funding from UNDP, UNFPA, other international organizations and individual Member States.

123. While supporting technical co-operation among developing countries, UNESCO has also contributed to the development of national

capabilities through policy-oriented sector studies, missions for advocacy, project formulation and monitoring, emergency and rehabilitation programmes, and documentation and information services.

124. UNESCO has co-operated substantially in educational development in the region with UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and ADB. Likewise, there has been meaningful co-operation between UNESCO and other regional bodies and institutions and donor countries. Notable among these are the Norwegian Government, the Japanese Government, the South-East Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South-Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the South Pacific Commission (SPC), the Colombo Plan Staff College for Technician Education, the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and the University of the South Pacific.

125. The contribution of non-governmental organizations such as the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE), the Asian Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), and the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ) is becoming increasingly important. The Asian Association of Open Universities and the Distance Education Regional Resource Centre are the direct outcomes of UNESCO's Regional Co-operative Programme in Higher Education for Development.

CONSULTATIVE MECHANISMS

MINEDAP and the Advisory Committee

126. At the senior policy level the two key agencies in regional co-operation are MINEDAP and the Advisory Committee on Regional Co-operation in Education in Asia and the Pacific. MINEDAP meets every six to ten years and provides a forum at the highest level to review educational developments in the region, make recommendations on overall policy directions, advise on new programmes for UNESCO and provide guidance on implementation strategies. The Advisory Committee, launched in 1980, meets every two years. Its principal functions are to advise the Director-General of UNESCO on measures for reinforcing regional co-operation and to follow up the recommendations of MINEDAP Conferences.

APEID

127. APEID, which was launched in 1973, has become the largest programme in the region. It has a regional consultative mechanism which meets every two years to review programme performance and provide guidance for effective implementation of programme activities. At national level consultations take place through National Development Groups in each participating country. Programmes are implemented through a large network of 199 Associated Centres in 29 Member States. This network provides a mechanism for facilitating interaction and co-operation among institutions and Member States in the organization of national, sub-regional and regional programmes of educational innovation and development.

APPEAL

128. The representatives of national APPEAL Co-ordinating Committees meet every two years at Meetings for Regional Co-ordination of APPEAL, the first of which was held in 1986, to review achievements, identify shortfalls and establish future strategies. Developing monitoring mechanisms and networking with non-governmental organizations in implementing Education for All activities have been emphasized. At national level, consultation takes place in the form of national Education for All meetings/seminars supported by UNESCO and/or other related United Nations agencies.

NEW INITIATIVES

129. The important role played by both APEID and APPEAL cannot be over-emphasized. It can be seen in the recurrent references and linking between their programmes and activities and those of Member States in the region. Impressed by their usefulness, parallel programmes have been .set up by other regions. However, in view of (i) growing emphasis in the General Conference of UNESCO on programme concentration; (ii) the need for clearer presentation of the scope and work of these networks for funding agencies and Member States; and (iii) the need for according co-ordinated attention to basic education, it has become necessary to delineate the scope and methods of work of APEID and APPEAL.

130. The Conference might consider the option that APPEAL focus its work on all aspects of literacy, post-literacy and continuing education and primary education with emphasis on: (i) advocacy; (ii) support

for planning, monitoring and evaluation; and (iii) technical resource support (design and development of curriculum, teaching/learning materials, training and evaluation for instance).

131. Should the Conference favour this option, APEID would continue to promote awareness and understanding about the role of educational innovation - its importance, processes and contexts at all levels of education. As regards the existing Associated Centres of APEID, the Conference may wish to recommend that each Member State strengthen and develop further the Centres, with emphasis on inter-institutional collaboration and co-operation at the national and inter-country levels, while UNESCO facilitates and provides cross-cultural expertise and assists with dissemination of information. In selected areas, APEID would identify innovations of significance and viability, verify their relevance to other Member States, prepare well-designed studies and promote the adoption/adaptation of such innovations through training and orientation, and through supporting their developments in the Member States.

132. Close co-ordination and complementarity in the work and operation between these two important regional programmes is essential. The consultation mechanism for the two programmes may be combined and involve non-governmental organizations and educationists active in the field. Such an approach could result in substantial savings and lead to more effective co-operation among various agencies at national level. Likewise, the Member States may also consider a similar integration at national level where necessary.

133. Keeping in view the continuing importance and relevance of APEID and APPEAL, inter-governmental organizations and Member States may consider providing financial assistance for these programmes in support of Education for All and other aspects of educational innovation and development.

134. New initiatives in several areas of education deserve consideration either within APEID or APPEAL or as new programmes. One such area is environmental education, whose importance, in terms of an economically and ecologically sustainable future, was recognized by UNCED. Environmental concerns cut across national and geographic boundaries of the region. Interest and opportunity exists for collaboration in establishing a new concept of 'integrated environmental education' encompassing many educational activities, both formal and non-formal, thereby ensuring a more harmonious co-existence of mankind and nature.

135. Another area suitable for new initiatives in regional co-operation is technical and vocational education, where there is a need to foster and strengthen national capabilities for managing reform. Such reform aims to meet new employment needs in industry, commerce and agriculture.

136. A third area for consideration is strengthening information systems related to educational management, both at local-site, national and regional levels. Among the countries of the region, there is considerable interest in developing up-to-date educational management information systems which can assist in planning, decision-making, and programme monitoring and evaluation, both for formal and non-formal education.

137. An important means of promoting regional co-operation in education is to mobilize the potential resources of existing institutions of high standing. Taking into account the needs of the region and using objective criteria and rigorous selection procedures, a small number of institutions known for their strength, their potential to nurture institutions in other countries and their ability to organize training, developmental research and documentation services could be designated as Centres of Excellence. A Centres of Excellence programme could be considered for early implementation, especially if extra-budgetary resources could be made available.

138. Taking into account the diversity of the region and the existence of groups of countries which share similar problems, the thematic/sub-regional approach may be pursued as a particularly effective means to foster sub-regional co-operation. This approach may be applied to meet special needs, particularly of island countries and newly independent Central Asian Republics.

PARTNERSHIPS

139. In view of the important role of non-governmental organizations and the private sector in promoting education, and their increasing involvement and participation in national and regional educational activities, close co-operation between UNESCO and non-governmental organizations is of vital importance. This may require more flexible and imaginative approaches than ever. Such approaches will need to take particular account of the substantially changing roles of the private

sector.

140. Apart from PROAP, UNESCO has a number of other offices in the region. While they undertake different programmes and have specialized missions, more effective co-operation between them is needed. Similarly, existing co-operation with other regional bodies could be further developed, in particular, SAARC, SEAMEO and APEC.

141. New opportunities are emerging for co-operation between UNESCO and other United Nations agencies such as UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and the World Bank, ADB and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). This is especially important as several other United Nations agencies are becoming increasingly involved in education programme activities. A noticeable move in international co-operation in education is that the traditional division of responsibility between the United Nations funding bodies and technical agencies such as UNESCO is breaking down. The funding bodies are now assuming a greater role in providing technical assistance themselves. This raises questions about future role and pattern of co-operation among various United Nations agencies.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

142. The Conference may wish to consider a number of important issues which appear to deserve attention. These include:

(i) [illegible]

(ii) [illegible]

(iii) [illegible]

(iv) [illegible]

(v) [illegible]